(c) the steps being taken by Government to provide a better future and other facilities for Non-Resident Indians?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) The UK Home Office, in March 2006, presented to the Parliament the new immigration guidelines "A Point-based System: Making Migration Work for Britain" and announced its implementation from 7th November 2006. According to the new guidelines, for an extension of visa or for Indefinite Leave of Settlement, a person staying in the UK under Highly Skilled Migration Programme (HSMO) has to earn 75 points (in 2003 it was 65) on the basis of his age, earnings and UK experience.

The revised rules require the applicants to re-qualify through a stringent points based system for their further visa extension which is against the initial promises of extension of visas on economic activity alone when they entered into the UK. The new point based system also expects them to gain more points on higher salaries and on younger age.

The High Commission has taken up the matter with British Parliamentarians. It has been informed by the Govt. of UK that the point based system is designed to allow highly skilled people to migrate to the UK over long run. They have further informed that to those who are already in the UK, Government will be as helpful as possible. The High Commission has also brought to the notice of the Govt. of UK the necessity of not applying the amendments with retrospective effect and the need to have some policy for the transition period.

British immigration laws

1099. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:
SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to stringent immigration laws recently enforced by the British Government, Indian professionals are going to be hit hard and they have to return in the middle of their contract;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken up the matter with the British Government in this regard and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any representation from the forum of Indian doctors working in Britain; and

(d) if so, the details thereof; and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) The UK Home Office, in March 2006, presented to the Parliament the new immigration guidelines "A Point-based System: Making Migration Work for Britain" and announced its implementation from 7th November 06. According to the new guidelines, for an extension of visa or for Indefinite Leave of Settlement, a person staying in the UK under HSMP has to earn 75 points. The revised rules require the applicants to re-qualify through a stringent based system on the basis of his age, earnings and UK experience for their further visa extension as against economic activity alone when they entered into the UK.

The High Commission has taken up the matter with British Parliamentarians. It has been informed by the Govt. of UK that the point based system is designed to allow highly skilled people to migrate to the UK over long run. They have further informed that to those who are already in the UK, Government will be as helpful as possible. The necessity of not applying the amendments with restrospective effect, and the need to have some policy in the transition period in order to ameliorate the impact fo these amendments on Indian professionals entering U.K. has been highlighted to UK Government.

(c) and (d) following the new immigration regulations announced in March, 2006, the Health Department of UK Government implemented new regulations which abolished the Permit Free Training (PFT) category through which most Indian Medical Graduates (IMGs) worked in the UK, and under which all non-EU doctors will thereafter require a work permit to work in the UK. However, work permit will be given against specific vacancies for which suitable UK/EU doctors are not available. The new regulations were confirmed by an order of the British High Court on 9th February, 2007. The Indian High Commission had taken up with the Government of UK the issue of allowing the Indian doctors to apply for the first round of recruitment under the system of current Modernising Medical Career launched by the UK Department of Health, which has been agreed to. Further efforts are on to ensure that IMGs are also allowed to appear unconditionally for the second round of recruitment that is likely to take place in April, 2007.